

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5608

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 5608

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, CI
SUBJECT: PRESSURE AGAINST DINA MOUNTS

REFS: (A) SANTIAGO 4103, (B) SANTIAGO 4445, (C) SANTIAGO 5413
(D) STATE 151062

1. SUMMARY: A ONCE PERVASIVE FEAR OF DINA HAS BEGUN TO FADE,
AS ACCOUNTS OF ITS PREVARICATIONS AND INEPTITUDE GAIN WIDER COVERAGE
IN THE MEDIA. MILITARY TRIBUNALS AND LAWYERS HAVE REJECTED DINA'S
VERSION OF EVENTS IN TWO SIGNIFICANT CASES. THIS TELEGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
A SERIES OF EPISODES IN WHICH DINA HAS BEEN BADLY DISCREDITED.
END SUMMARY.

2. THE VILLA MEXICO/VELASO CHAPTER. WHILE MOTIVES AND FULL
DETAILS MAY NEVER FULLY CLARIFIED, A CHRONOLOGY OF THIS CASE
AT THIS POINT SHOULD BY ITSELF BE SUFFICIENT TO ILLUSTRATE
DINA'S EXTREME STUPIDITY.

A. MAY 2: A GROUP OF MEN PICK UP THE 16 YEAR OLD SON OF
CARLOS VELOSO, A LONG-TIME LABOR LEADER WORKING WITH THE CARDIJN
FOUNDATION, WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. THE BOY
RETURNS HOME NEAR MIDNIGHT, OBVIOUSLY BADLY BEATEN AND SCARRED
BY CIGARETTE BURNS. ON THE NEXT DAY THE VELOSOS REPORT THE
INCIDENT TO CARDIJN CO-WORKERS. THEY FILE LEGAL PAPERS SEEKING
PROTECTION FROM REPRISALS BY THE SECURITY AGENTS WHO ALLEGEDLY HAD
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TORTURED THE YOUTH. CARDIJN AND THE CHURCH SEE THE INCIDENT AS
ANOTHER EFFORT BY THE GOC TO DISCREDIT THEM AFTER THEIR ANTI-GOC
MAY DAY ACTIVITIES AND JUST BEFORE THE ILO CONVENED IN GENEVA.

B. MAY 9. SECURITY AGENTS DETAIN A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATE
(PDC) ACTIVITST FROM VILLA MEXICO, A SANTIAGO SUBURB. THE ACTIVITST,
WILLIAM ZUELETA, LATER SAYS THAT HE MANAGED TO ESCAPE THEM AFTER
A BEATING. HE SHOWS VICARIATE PERSONNEL THE PLACE WHERE HE HAD

BEEN TORTURED.

C. MAY 9. EARLY THE SAME MORNING, OSWALDO FIGUEROA, A 50 YEAR OLD SOCIALIST, IS DRAGGED FROM HIS APARTMENT BY SECURITY AGENTS.

D. MAY 11. SECURITY AGENTS OCCUPY THE VELOSO HOUSE, OSTENSIBLY TO PROTECT THE FAMILY FROM REPRISALS. IN FACT, THEY STAY FOR WEEKS, ISOLATING THEM FROM ALL OUTSIDERS. AGENTS PICK UP HUMBERTO DROUILLAS, A 59 YEAR OLD CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT ALSO FROM VILLA MEXICO; EDUARDO DE LA FUENTE, A LONG TIME COMMUNIST WHO HAD RECENTLY MOVED OUT OF VILLA MEXICO. (THEY MAY ALSO HAVE PICKED UP JORGE TRONCOSO AGUIRRE, A NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER OF THE UP - THE OLD ALLENDE COALITION - AND JEWELER.) SAME EVENING, AN AMBULANCE SPIRITS AWAY ZUELETA UNDER STRANGE CIRCUMSTANCES.

E. MAY 12. DINA AGENTS PICK UP LUIS MARDONES, AN EMPLOYEE OF THE LABOR SECTION OF THE CARDIJN FOUNDATION.

F. MAY 14. DINA AGENTS TELL FIGUEROA'S FAMILY THAT HE IS AT CUATRO ALAMOS. DINA, THEY SAY, HAD RESCUED FIGUEROA FROM THE SAME CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WHO HAD ALSO ABDUCTED VELOSO. DROUILLAS' FAMILY IS TOLD THAT HE IS AT CUATRO ALAMOS FOR HIS ROLE IN THE KIDNAPPING.

G. THE FOLLOWING WEEK, RIGHTIST TABLOID "LA SEGUNDA" AND GOC-OWNED "EL CRONISTA" FEATURE INTERVIEWS WITH THE VELOSO FAMILY IN WHICH THE BOY ABSOLVES DINA AND IDENTIFIES DROUILLAS, DE LA FUENTE AND ZULETA AS THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ABDUCTION AND TORTURE. THE FATHER ADDS THAT THE BOY HAD BEEN RAPED BY HIS ABDUCTORS. ONE GOC VERSION CONFUSES JAIME TRONCOSO VALDEZ
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(A 20 YEAR OLD PARALYTIC SOCIALIST ACTIVIST WHO HAD BEEN HELD FOR ONLY A WEEK OR SO) WITH JORGE TRONCOSO AND LINKED TRONCOSO WITH THE MAY DAY BOMBINGS AS WELL AS THE VELOSO KIDNAPPING. SINCE JORGE TRONCOSO IS STILL MISSING, THE GOC FINDS IT CONVENIENT TO CONTINUE THIS CONFUSION.

H. THE CHURCH AND CARDIJN FOUNDATION MOUNT AN ARTICULATE DEFENSE. FULLY AIRED IN THE MEDIA, MOST OF IT EVIDENCES SKEPTICISM OF THE GOC VERSION. THE MEDIA APPEARS TO RELISH REPORTING ON THIS HERETOFORE TABOO AREA. THE GOC THEREUPON TAKES THE NOW UNUSUAL STEP OF DECIDING TO PROSECUTE THE CASE UNDER "TIME OF WAR" PROCEDURES RATHER THAN IN CIVIL COURTS AS A COMMON CRIME, OR UNDER MILITARY "TIME OF PEACE" RULES.

I. THE VELOSOS MEANWHILE ARRANGE FOR PAROLE INTO CANADA. DURING THE WEEK OF JUNE 6, THEY DECIDE TO RECALL, AND REVERT TO THEIR FIRST ACCOUNT. THE VICARIATE, ARMED WITH THEIR DEPOSITION, CONVINCES THE SUPREME COURT TO NAME A JUDGE TO HEAR THE ACCOUNT FIRSTHAND ON THE NEXT DAY SINCE THE VELOSOS ARE TO DEPART THAT EVENING. NEXT MORNING, THE VELOSOS ARE PICKED UP BY PLAINCLOTHED POLICE BUT ARE QUICKLY LOCATED AT A POLICE STATION. THE JUDGE RUSHES OVER AND OBTAINS THE YOUTH'S STATEMENT BEFORE HE IS WISKED AWAY BY THE MILITARY FOR A NINE HOUR INTERROGATION AND A WEEKEND IN IRONS IN JUVENILE DELINQUENT'S PRISON.

J. THE BOYIS RELEASED AND LEAVES FOR CANADA A FEW DAYS LATER. THE MILITARY PROSECUTOR RULES ON JUNE 23 THAT THE CHARGES AGAINST MARDONES, DE LA FUENTE, AND FIGUEROA ARE "COMPLETELY WITH MERIT." THEY ARE UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASED. THE MYSTERIOUS ZULETA AND DROUILLAS AND A NEW FIGURE -- JAIME SOTO VERA -- ARE HELD FOR POSSIBLE GUN CONTROL VIOLATIONS BUT RELEASED FROM INCOMMUNICADO STATUS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SANTIAGO 5608

K. "QUE PASA," GENERALLY ONE OF THE MOST CONSERVATIVE AND PRO-GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS, SUBSEQUENTLY RUNS A DEVASTATING ACCOUNT OF THE VELOSO CASE INCLUDING A CHRONOLOGY LARGELY BASED ON DATA SUPPLIED BY THE VICARIATE. ITS STORY PICTURES THE VOLOSOS EMBRACING SEVERAL OF THE ALLEGED ABDUCTORS. IT NOTES THAT YOUNG VELOSO WAS SO UPSET THAT HE VOMITED BLOOD IN THE PRESENCE OF REPORTERS. THE SAME ISSUE CONTAINS A GUEST EDITORIAL ESSENTIALLY ARGUING THAT AN EMERGENCY REGIME COULD NOT BE "INSTITUTIONALIZED," THUS HITTING AT THE BASIC TENET OF THE PINOCHET GOVERNMENT.

L. NO ONE QUESTIONS THE VERACITY OF "QUE PASA'S" RESPECTED EDITOR, JAIME MARTINEZ, WHEN HE REPORTS THAT UNIDENTIFIED MEN HAD TRIED TO ABDUCT HIM TWO DAYS AFTER THE FOREGOING ARTICLE APPEARED. THE OUTCRY IS IMMEDIATE: THE GOC INSISTS THAT IT WILL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE MATTER; "EL MERCURIO" RUNS A SCATHING EDITORIAL ABOUT INTIMIDATION OF THE PRESS -- LEAVING NO DOUBT IN ANYONE'S MIND WHERE IT WAS PLACING THE BLAME.

3. MORE FALL OUT FROM THE SHEILA CASSIDY CASE: FOLLOWING THE NOVEMBER 1975 DETENTION OF BRITISH DOCTOR SHEILA CASSIDY, THE GOC HAD ASSERTED THAT DINA AGENTS HAD BEEN WOUNDED BY A HAIL OF AKA MACHINEGUN FIRE FROM SOMEONE ACCOMPANYING DR. CASSIDY (IN "RETURNING" THE FIRE, DINA KILLED A DOMESTIC IN THE HOUSE). DINA ALSO ALLEGED IT FOUND A CLANDESTINE HOSPITAL IN THE BUILDING.

THESE CHARGES WERE REJECTED BY THE COLUMBAN FATHERS, OWNERS
OF THE RESIDENCE. IN A QUIET RULING IN MAY 1976, THE MILITARY
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JUDGE HEARING THE CASE FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF A CLANDESTINE HOSPITAL,
NO EVIDENCE THAT THERE HAD BEEN FIRING FROM THE BUILDING,
AND NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY DINA PERSONNEL HAD BEEN INJURED. NOW
THE COLUMBAN FATHERS HAVE HAD THAT DECISION UPHELD BY A MILITARY
APPEALS COURT (MIXED MILITARY AND CIVILIAN JUDGES) AND THE
CASE HAS BEEN STAYED INDEFINITELY. THIS APPELLATE DECISION RECEIVED
AMPLE MEDIA PLAY.

4. COMMENT: MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE VELOSO CASE REMAIN UNANSWERED:
HOW AND WHY DID DINA GET ITSELF INTO THIS MESS? WHERE IS JORGE
TRONCOSO? WHAT IS ZULETA'S ROLE? VELOSO SENIOR'S? DETECTIVE
THRILLER READERS CAN HAVE A FIELD DAY.

5. UNCLEAR AS THEY WERE, THE INCIDENTS MADE MANY POINTS TO
ANY CHILEAN WHO CARED TO READ ABOUT THEM. DINA ARRESTS ILLEGALLY,
DETAINS ILLEGALLY, TORTURES, INTIMIDATES, AND CAUSES PEOPLE
TO DISAPPEAR -- AND THEN LIES ABOUT IT ALL.

6. IT WOULD SEEM UNLIKELY THAT ANY SECURITY AGENCY COULD SURVIVE
INTACT AFTER SUCH A SERIES OF REVELATIONS. BUT WHETHER IT DOES
OR NOT, THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAVE ERODED FEAR
OF THE ORGANIZATION: IT NO LONGER APPEARS OMNIPOTENT. INDEED, THE
PUBLIC HAS SEEN THAT EVEN WITHIN THE ARMY, DINA HAS BEEN
SNUBBED. THE VILLA MEXICO INCIDENT MAY NEVER BE CLARIFIED,
BUT IT ALREADY HAS CHANGED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS GOVERNMENT'S
SECURITY FORCES AND ITS CITIZENRY.
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